

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Withdrawn) A screening method for a prophylactic or therapeutic substance for a disease associated with a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a salt thereof, which comprises using said protein or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof.

2. (Withdrawn) A screening method for a prophylactic or therapeutic substance for a disease associated with a protein comprising the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a salt thereof, which comprises using said protein or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof.

3. (Withdrawn, currently amended) The screening method of claim 1, wherein the disease is ~~diabetes or~~ a renal disease.

4. (Withdrawn) The screening method of claim 1, wherein the disease is diabetic nephropathy.

5. (Withdrawn, currently amended) The screening method of claim 1, which comprises cultivating a cell having an ability to produce a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a partial peptide thereof ~~or a salt thereof~~ in the presence and absence of a test substance, and comparing the amounts of said protein or a partial peptide thereof ~~or a salt thereof~~ produced under the two conditions.

6. (Withdrawn, currently amended) A screening kit for a prophylactic or therapeutic substance for a disease associated with a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a salt thereof, which includes (a) a cell having an ability to produce said protein or a partial peptide thereof ~~or a salt thereof~~, and (b) a substance selected from the group consisting of an antibody against said protein or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof, a polynucleotide to which said protein or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof can bind, and a transcription regulatory factor capable of interacting with said protein or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof.

7. (Withdrawn) The screening method of claim 1, which comprises comparing the activities of a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof in the presence and absence of a test substance.

8. (Withdrawn) A screening kit for a prophylactic or therapeutic substance for a disease associated with a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a salt thereof, which includes (a) said protein or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof, and (b) a polynucleotide to which said protein or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof can bind or a transcription regulatory factor capable of interacting with said protein or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof.

9. (Currently amended) A screening method for a prophylactic or therapeutic substance for ~~diabetes~~ or a renal disease, which comprises cultivating a cell that contains an insulin gene or a gene under the control of an insulin promoter with a

protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof in the presence and absence of a test substance, comparing the expression level of the insulin gene or the gene under the control of the insulin promoter in the presence and absence of the test substance, and selecting the test substance that changes the expression level of the insulin gene or the gene under the control of the insulin promoter as a candidate for the prophylactic or therapeutic substance.

10. (Withdrawn) A screening kit for a prophylactic or therapeutic substance for a disease associated with a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a salt thereof, which includes (a) a cell containing a gene whose expression is controlled by said protein or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof, (b) said protein or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof, and (c) a polynucleotide capable of hybridizing to said gene under highly stringent conditions.

11. (Withdrawn, currently amended) The screening method of claim 7, which comprises cultivating a cell having an ability to produce a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof in the presence and absence of a test substance, and comparing the activities of said protein or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof under the two conditions.

12. (Withdrawn, currently amended) A screening kit for a prophylactic or therapeutic substance for a disease associated with a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by

SEQ ID NO:2 or a salt thereof, which includes (a) a cell having an ability to produce said protein or a partial peptide thereof ~~or a salt thereof~~, and (b) a polynucleotide capable of hybridizing to a gene whose expression is controlled by said protein or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof under highly stringent conditions.

13-14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously presented) The screening method of claim 9, wherein the cell contains a polynucleotide comprising the nucleotide sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:1, which encodes the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously presented) The screening method of claim 9, wherein the renal disease is diabetic nephropathy.

18. (Currently amended) A screening method for a prophylactic or therapeutic substance for ~~diabetes or a~~ renal disease, which comprises cultivating a cell having an ability to produce a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a partial peptide thereof ~~or a salt thereof~~ in the presence and absence of a test substance, comparing the expression level of the mRNA that encodes said protein or a partial peptide thereof in the presence and absence of the test substance, and selecting the test substance that changes the expression level of the mRNA as a candidate for the prophylactic or therapeutic substance.

19. (Withdrawn, currently amended) A screening kit for a prophylactic or therapeutic substance for a disease associated with a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by

SEQ ID NO:2 or a salt thereof, which includes (a) a cell having an ability to produce said protein or a partial peptide thereof ~~or a salt thereof~~, and (b) a polynucleotide capable of hybridizing to mRNA that encodes said protein or a partial peptide thereof under highly stringent conditions.

20. (Withdrawn) A prophylactic or therapeutic method for a disease associated with a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a salt thereof in a mammal, which comprises administering an antibody against said protein or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof to said mammal.

21. (Withdrawn, currently amended) The prophylactic or therapeutic method of claim 20, wherein the disease is ~~diabetes or a~~ renal disease.

22. (Withdrawn) The prophylactic or therapeutic method of claim 20, wherein the disease is diabetic nephropathy.

23. (Withdrawn) A prophylactic or therapeutic method for a disease associated with a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a salt thereof in a mammal, which comprises administering a polynucleotide having a base sequence complementary to the base sequence that encodes said protein or a partial peptide thereof to said mammal.

24. (Withdrawn, currently amended) The prophylactic or therapeutic method of claim 23, wherein the disease is ~~diabetes or a~~ renal disease.

25. (Withdrawn) The prophylactic or therapeutic method of claim 23, wherein the disease is diabetic nephropathy.

26. (Withdrawn) A diagnostic method for a disease associated with a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a salt thereof in a mammal, which comprises using an antibody against said protein or a partial peptide thereof or a salt thereof.

27. (Withdrawn, currently amended) The diagnostic method of claim 26, wherein the disease is ~~diabetes~~ or a renal disease.

28. (Withdrawn) The diagnostic method of claim 26, wherein the disease is diabetic nephropathy.

29. (Withdrawn) A diagnostic method for a disease associated with a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a salt thereof in a mammal, which comprises using a polynucleotide comprising the base sequence that encodes said protein or a partial peptide thereof.

30. (Withdrawn, currently amended) The diagnostic method of claim 29, wherein the disease is ~~diabetes~~ or a renal disease.

31. (Withdrawn) The diagnostic method of claim 29, wherein the disease is diabetic nephropathy.

32-33. (Canceled)

34. (Withdrawn, currently amended) A prophylactic or therapeutic method for ~~diabetes~~ or a renal disease in a mammal, which comprises administering a TSC-22 suppressant to said mammal.

35. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 34, wherein the renal disease is diabetic nephropathy.

36-37. (Canceled)

38. (Previously presented) The screening method of claim 9, wherein the test substance that increases the expression level of the insulin gene or the gene under the control of the insulin promoter is selected as a candidate for the prophylactic or therapeutic substance.

39. (Previously presented) The screening method of claim 9, wherein the cell is cultivated with a protein comprising the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or a salt thereof.

40. (Currently amended) The screening method of claim 9, wherein the cell has the ability to produce a protein comprising the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 ~~or a salt thereof~~.

41. (Previously presented) The screening method of claim 18, wherein the test substance that decreases the expression level of the mRNA is selected as a candidate for the prophylactic or therapeutic substance.

42. (Currently amended) The screening method of claim 18, wherein the cell has the ability to produce a protein comprising the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 ~~or a salt thereof~~.

43. (Previously presented) The screening method of claim 18, wherein the renal disease is diabetic nephropathy.